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December 18, 2007

Eric Taylor, Project Manager
DOT&PF Division of Program Development
PO Box 112500
Juneau, Alaska 99801-2500

VIA Fax: (907) 465-6984

Dear Mr. Taylor,

Kawerak would like to submit the following comments DOT's "2030 Let's Get Moving" Long Range Transportation Policy Plan Update.

Kawerak understands the fiscal position the State DOT is in with the federal funds it receives versus the needs of all Alaskans. Unfortunately, this plan is biased in favor of urban Alaska leaving rural Alaska as the lowest priority for funding and options. The strategic system development goals concentrate on the National Highway System and the demand of urban capacity on congested highways in Alaska and leaves rural Alaska at a severe disadvantage due to the fact that rural Alaska doesn't have any roads identified as NHS, minimal AHS and consist mostly of local roads. We urge the State to revisit the LRTP.

We do agree with some of the strategic plan of actions and hope those strategies will provide rural Alaska with options to improve its needed transportation infrastructure. Specifically:

"Action 4.1 Pursue state funding mechanisms." We agree with the Transportation Stakeholder's Group recommendation that the State of Alaska should establish a State Transportation Fund to meet the needs of local/community roads in rural Alaska.

"Action 4.3 Establish rural transportation infrastructure bank." This is very admirable but the reality of cities in rural Alaska is that they are barely able to provide basic services with their tax base. Many can't afford a new loan or don't have the ability to raise their tax base to cover additional debt service. We recommend that the State of Alaska create a rural transportation grant program in lieu of a loan program.

"Action 4.7 Reinstitute the Local Service Roads and Trails Program." We agree with this plan of action and fully support the efforts to bring this program back to address the needs in rural Alaska.

"Ports and Harbors." We urge the State of Alaska to create a state program for construction and upgrade of ports and harbors. Alaska needs a comprehensive

system approach to aid in developing our economy by tapping into Alaska's resources and fisheries. With the onset of climate change, scientists predict the opening of the Northern and Northwest Passage Sea Routes. The State of Alaska needs to be prepared for the increase in ocean going vessel traffic. The State of Alaska and local communities need to prepare for the potential infrastructure and economic impacts to meet the basic needs of ocean-going vessels. The State of Alaska is in a strategic location for national security. Most importantly communities are concerned about safety and the environment. We need to be proactive and be prepared for environmental disasters in the Bering Sea and Arctic Ocean and to be able to respond in a timely manner. The State of Alaska needs to develop a system to plan and coordinate the development of harbors into a statewide system, rather than simply referring all entities to the Corp of Engineers.

"Airports: Bike and Pedestrian trails." Once again the plan concentrates on urban needs. Many rural hubs also need these trails to and from the airport; along with trails to schools. We encourage the LRTP to revisit this need which will provide safe mobility for pedestrians in rural hubs.

As stated on page 45, Alaska has neither taxes nor highway user fees dedicated to transportation needs. We encourage the State of Alaska to research this option of highway user fees for a dedicated transportation program.

There is an increase in 4-wheeler and vehicle traffic in rural Alaska creating dust on rural village's local roads. We support the State's efforts in researching dust control methods to alleviate this problem.

Under the "System development needs for Airports" (exhibit 20, page 61) list, the Northwest Area Plan is listed as having no development needs ("none needed"). This needs to be reviewed as some airports don't meet the adequate length of 3,300 feet, some runways need to be brought up meet to State standards and many need a cross wind runway for safety.

Thank you for allowing us to participate in this public process. If you have any questions please contact me at 443-5231.

Sincerely,



Loretta Bullard
President

cc: KTP
CSD VP